



147th Edition



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Board of Directors

- Mike Ford, President
- Karen Vanderbilt, President Elect
- Rob Lupisella, Senior Director
- Katie DeGraff, Director
- Rodney George, Member at Large
- Cat Jensen, Member at Large
- Nick Lovullo, Member at Large
- Steve Csapo, Past President
- Jaime Lovullo, Secretary
- Hans Koomen, Treasurer

President's Message



I must confess, as I write this, I find myself grappling with a twinge of regret. You see, I missed the recent District Conference – an event I had been eagerly anticipating – all because of a college visit with my daughter, Quinn.

The conference date change clashed with our pre-planned college visit, and in the grand scheme of things, Quinn's exploration of her future took precedence. There will be plenty more opportunities for me to attend District Conferences, but this precious time with my daughter is quickly fizzling out. As I navigated through campus and information sessions with Quinn, I couldn't shake the feeling that I was missing out on valuable Rotary fellowship and learning opportunities. Yet, with each step she took, each question she asked, I knew deep down that I was exactly where I needed to be – by her side, supporting her as she embarks on this pivotal journey.

So, while I may have missed out on the District Conference this time around, I am reminded that Rotary is not just about attending events or checking off boxes. It's about embracing the moments that matter most, whether it's nurturing the next generation of leaders or simply being there for our loved ones when they need us most. As Rotarians, we understand the importance of balancing our commitments to service and family, knowing that both are integral parts of who we are. And so, while I may have

missed out on one opportunity, I am grateful for the chance to witness Quinn's growth and to be a part of her journey – a journey that has been shaped, in part, by the values and lessons instilled in her through Rotary. From her early years attending Rotary events with me, to participating in Interact club, she has been immersed in our Rotary values of service, leadership, fellowship, and community. Through these experiences, she learned the importance of giving back, of empathy, and of making a difference in the world around her.

As we walked through the campus, I saw glimpses of her confidence, her compassion, and her sense of purpose – qualities that have been nurtured through her involvement with Rotary. In the end, isn't that what Rotary is all about? Empowering individuals to reach their fullest potential, supporting one another through life's twists and turns, and embracing the moments that truly matter.

Yours in Rotary,
Mike



Right: Quinn enjoying the art dept. photography studio



- Mon. May 6 Board of Directors Meeting 6:00 @ Avon Circlevew
- Tues. May 7 Regular Meeting 6:30, Service Project:Taco in a bag & Corn Fest Mtg.
- Tues. May 14 QUAD CITIES Golf & Dinner, Woodlyn Hills Golf Club
- Tues. May 21 Regular Meeting 6:30, Service Project TBD
- Tues. May 28 Regular Meeting 6:30 Program: Reflecting on District Conference

For more meeting details, go to avonrotary.org



Birthday

- ⇒ Jean Antkowiak
- ⇒ Marcie Cameron
- ⇒ Kate Carbone
- ⇒ Leann Hill
- ⇒ Rob Lupisella

Rotary Anniversary

- ⇒ Ed Kime (2010)

Wedding Anniversary

- ⇒ Kelly Cole
- ⇒ Marcie Cameron
- ⇒ Steve Csapo
- ⇒ Tom Honan

DISTRICT TRAINING ASSEMBLY

5

Avon Rotarians (plus our very own District Governor) attended the District Training Assembly at Canandaigua Academy. It was an enriching experience, filled with valuable insights and connections with fellow Rotarians from across District 7120. We're grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow together and look forward to bringing new ideas back to our club!



Submitted by Mike Ford via social media

April 13, 2024

ECLIPSE



We had a blast participating in the Avon Totality Rocks event! Despite the clouds, we made the most of it by selling tee shirts, sandwiches, snacks, and hosting a Cosmic Costume Contest. Congratulations to our costume contest winner for his incredible Elliot and E.T. costume. Even though the clouds hindered our view, experiencing 3 minutes of total darkness was truly captivating.



But here's the best part: profits from the tee shirt and concession sales will help the club continue our good work near and far! We collected \$35 in tips which will be donated to the Livingston County Humane Society.



Thank you to everyone who supported us and helped make this event a success. Together, we're making a positive impact in our community.

Submitted by Mike Ford via social media

April 8, 2024



LINKING HANDS FOR LEARNING EXPERIENCE



April 9: We had the pleasure of hosting a special presentation by our very own Avon Rotarians Helen Zamboni, Charlene Masten, and T.J. Vonglis, who embarked on their first volunteer trip to Nicaragua with Linking Hands For Learning.

For over a decade, our club has been deeply involved in supporting education in Nicaragua through Linking Hands for Learning's school builds. Many of our members have dedicated their time, served on the Board of Directors, and generously contributed to these meaningful projects.



In Nicaragua, especially in the isolated mountain regions, there is a pressing need for better schools. Through our partnership with Linking Hands for Learning, we are addressing this need head-on by constructing safe and conducive learning environments for children in these areas.



We are thrilled to continue this partnership by presenting a check for \$2,500 to support future school builds in Nicaragua. Together, we are making a lasting impact on communities and empowering young minds to thrive through education.

Submitted by: Mike Ford via social media

MULTIPURPOSE MEETING

At our April 15 meeting, we got busy and wrote welcome notes for all the gift bags at the upcoming District Conference. Many thanks to those that penned one of the 250 messages.

We also heard from Avon Central School Superintendent, Ryan Pacatte. He shared the state of the school & budget information and encouraged residents to vote May 21, 2024.

We also had a Foundation moment and presented a plus pin to Kirk. (See below.)

Submitted by Laurie Vonglis



FOUNDATION MOMENT



Congratulations Avon Rotarians, Jeff Herberger (+5) and Kirk Vanderbilt (+4) on receiving their Paul Harris plus pins.

Jeff & Kirk's commitment to service and generosity exemplifies the spirit of Rotary, making a significant impact in our community and beyond.

Thank you both for your outstanding contributions and continued support to the Rotary Foundation.

Submitted by Laurie Vonglis



TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

in someone's world,
you don't have
to be amazing,
rich, talented,
or beautiful.
You just have
to be you
and CARE.

Rebecca Fox



GIGANTIC shoutout for Rotarian
Collin Hayes for developing the
club's brand new
Avon Rotary Corn Festival Website!

Check it out...

www.avoncornfest.com





You are cordially invited to attend the annual Quad Cities event.
 This year Mt. Morris Rotary has set the occasion for
 Tuesday, May 14th. Golf & dinner will be at
 Woodlyn Hills Golf Course.
 Please sign up and join in the fun!

Golf:	Dinner:
◆ \$35 18 Holes, Cart & Hot Dog Lunch	◆ \$35 Steak Buffet Dinner
◆ 11:30 Registration	◆ 5:00 Social Hour 6:00 Dinner
◆ 12:30 Shotgun begins	◆ RSVP to Laurie by May 8
◆ Send your foursome to Laurie by May 8	◆ Pay at dinner
◆ Pay at the course	

Fellow Avon Rotarians... **SERVICE PROJECT OPPORTUNITY!!!**

Once again, **Special Olympics** is asking for our help. On Saturday the 04th of May, a pretty big yearly Special Olympics track and field event is being held outside at the high school.



Rotarians are needed to staff a tent from 10-12 that has water and sports drinks for the competitors to refresh themselves. Our job is to show encouragement and support for the athletes, hand them the drink of their choice, and mingle a bit to add to the festive atmosphere.

Minimally, really only a few people are needed, but **the more helpers make for easier work and a more exciting atmosphere for the Special Olympians.**

If you are able to help for any time from 10-12, call me.

Thanks, Greg Antkowiak
 733-2926



**IN OUR CLUB'S 97 YEAR HISTORY,
WE HAVE NEVER BEEN HOST CLUB
TO A DISTRICT GOVERNOR,
UNTIL THIS YEAR.
THE 2024 DISTRICT
CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS**



Reflection from our District Governor, Julie Carney: Well, as I write this, two days have passed since the close of the 2024 District Conference, and I have had a little time to reflect on the weekend. I keep returning to the word my Dad said many times during the last few weeks of his life while enjoying time and experiences with those important to him: "WOW".

Since November 10th, 2020, when it was announced publicly to our club that I had been selected to be the 2023-24 District Governor, I had been planning in my mind what our conference would look like, how it would be perceived by those in the District, and what priorities would be at the forefront of the message delivered.

I quickly selected the original core team of the conference committee that November: We had myself and Jim along with Tom Honan as the Conference Chair, Helen as Secretary, Janis as Treasurer, and Kirk as DC Facilities Coordinator. We had our first of many meetings in February of 2021. Planning continued, progress moved forward, and changes would be made.

In March 2022, Jim and I were at the Multi-District PETS training, and my 2023-24 classmate, RI President Gordon McInally, was there. He and his wife Heather shared with us that mental health was going to be a major focus of our year. That was so exciting to me because it was important to our family, and I knew that it affected so many other families as well but was often hidden. Planning continued, progress moved forward, and changes would be made.

In the summer of 2022, after a few site visits, we found our spot, Ithaca! Planning continued, and additional members were added to the team: Bruce, A.K.A. "Groucho," as Master of Ceremonies, Bob Green/Rochester Deaf Rotary Club as Marketing/Promotion Coordinator, Marcia C. as Banquets Facilitator, Cat as Service Project Coordinator, Karen as Registration Coordinator, Katie/Laurie as Activities/Poker Run Coordinators, Laurie as Centerpieces/Decorations Coordinator, Jaime as Volunteer Coordinator, Tom V as Co-chair of Facilities, David as Celebration of Life/Songwriter Coordinator, Jean Bendix as Celebration of Life Choir Director, Mark Shepard as Bright Spot Announcer, Linda Kohl as Social Media Promotion, Dave and Ann DeMers as Service Display Coordinators, Vicki VanVorhuer and Chris Wood as Hospitality Suite Coordinators, Gretchen DiNardo as Youth Exchange Chair, Pam Schlierf as Youth Exchange Vice Chair, Jack Fredricks as Golf Outing Coordinator, and Michele McManus and the Newark Rotary Club as the Foundation Auction Coordinators.



When Jim and I went to the International Assembly in January 2023, RI President Elect Gordon shared his whole story along with this year's theme, "Create Hope in the World." I was so excited; the theme was perfect, and the focus on mental

2024 DISTRICT CONFERENCE, HOSTED BY AVON ROTARY

health was so important at this time. Planning continued, progress moved forward, and changes would be made.

After three years of meetings, planning, and sharing my vision with the committee members, things were really starting to line up and take form. We were really picking up speed, getting the message out to clubs promoting the conference, and then the phone call. In late November, I received the call from Ithaca: the conference center would not be ready in time. Oh S#*T! That was on a Friday, and by Tuesday, we already had a new location, pivoted our plans, and within a few weeks, we had new promotional materials, a new promotional video (by my husband Jim), and things were quickly coming together. Planning continued, progress moved forward, and changes would be made.

After a whirlwind few months, lots of work, and continued planning, the weekend arrived. We really had limited time when we arrived at the Hotel and Conference Center to get things set up. There was another event that didn't clear out of the space until late in the morning. On Friday, after picking up our International President's Rep, Price Findley, Jim and I were out to lunch with him and the Keynote speaker, our good friend Pauline Perreault.

When we returned from lunch, we walked into the hotel lobby, and I looked around and thought, "WOW," look at this place, all the Rotarians, it was a beautiful sight.



That night, the ballroom, the decorations, the music, the speakers, the youth, the chance to give my Mom and daughter Hannah Paul Harris awards... "WOW".

Saturday's awards and breakout sessions, the service projects by Rotarians and the youth, the afternoon activities and Poker Run, the evening address from Pauline, more Bright Spots and the entertaining Dueling Pianos, "WOW".

Sunday began with the much talked-about Celebration of Life followed by the closing session and my thank you's to the committee. And after all was done, everything was torn down, and just about all had left, Jim asked me how I thought the weekend had gone when compared to the vision I had three and a half years earlier, and without hesitation, I responded, "The conference far exceeded the vision I had." And that is something to say "WOW" about.

So again, my thanks to everyone on the committee and all the club members who helped District 7120 Converge, Connect, and Celebrate everything Rotary this past weekend.



Reflection by Rob Lupisella: I was very excited that Linking Hands For Learning would be able to be the keynote speakers during the morning session following breakfast on Saturday. The presentation shared our background story of school construction efforts in Nicaragua, and the amazing collaboration with District 7120 Rotary Clubs. Ten different clubs have supported school construction efforts there. It was the Avon Rotary who first came forward to offer financial assistance when this entire endeavor began over twelve years ago. The session also included the importance of building relationships in Nicaragua, and the new initiative to support a special education school for students with disabilities, called Huellitas de Amor. Our fellow Avon Rotarian and Linking Hands Board Member, Jake Ayers suggested we should have a "Donation Challenge" directed at the attendees. A brilliant idea! After the presentation we announced, "Before dinner can we raise one thousand dollars? Let's make a difference and create hope in the world." As I told everyone the next day, Rotarians never cease to amaze me with their incredible caring and generosity. With two Rotarians announcing a dollar for dollar matching donation, and almost \$7,000 in individual donations, a total of \$14,000 was raised to fund construction efforts in the coming year. Supporting basic education and literacy is a focus area for Rotary, and we surely did that and more at the District 7120 Conference in Saratoga. I am so thankful to District Governor Julie Carney, Conference Chairperson Tom Honan, and the rest of the planning committee for giving Linking Hands for Learning this incredible opportunity to share our story.

2024 DISTRICT CONFERENCE, HOSTED BY AVON ROTARY



Reflection by Jaime Lovullo, 1st timer: While I am sure some members of my club would be surprised to learn I am actually quite shy, I was very anxious for my first District Conference. Fortunately, the first conference I attended was also the year the District Governor was from my club, so I was on the steering committee and was working with friends to plan the event. Helping at the registration table allowed me to ‘informally’ meet many of the attendees and put faces to names.

My hope for the event was to broaden my network, connect with like-minded individuals, and find inspiration for continuing service and community leadership. The event did not disappoint! I was consistently impressed with the connections I felt with other Rotarians; not because we were the same gender, in the same age group, same race, from the same geographical location, or used the same pronouns, but because we all shared a common philosophy – Service Above Self, and that transcended all else.

I was challenged by some of the speakers to see things from different perspectives. I was inspired hearing about other club’s service projects and ways they support their communities and the world, and couldn’t wait to take back some new ideas to my club. I listened to stories that reaffirmed the philosophy that while, “One person can make a difference,” we are truly **better together** and can **create hope in the world**.



Reflection by Cat Jensen: During the District Conference two unique service projects were celebrated and completed. Many Rotarians, Interact, and exchange students helped contribute to the success of 200 “Party in a Bag” and an incredible 10,584 meals donated to the Franklin Community Center in Saratoga Springs. Some said this was the highlight of the conference for them!

Two break-out sessions happened Saturday morning with upwards of 65 people participating in each session. The “Party in the Bag” consisted of a cake mix, frosting, birthday candles, balloons and streamers. Notably, Wegmans donated all the cake mixes and frosting! A million thanks goes out to Wegmans for helping Rotary with our project.



The “Pantry Packs” included cinnamon apple oatmeal, rice & beans, basil pasta, and mac & cheese dinners. Each Pantry Pack box contained 7 meal bags, 42 servings, 252 Pantry Pack boxes totaling 10,584 meals! The beauty of the Pantry Packs - no gloves, hair nets, beard nets, or other health and safety features were required! The food packages were already hermetically sealed with no refrigeration needed. These Pantry Packs fulfilled our needs completely keeping it simple yet effective.

John Falco, Food Pantry Manager from Franklin Community Center in Saratoga Springs was on hand to explain their mission and the number of folks they serve. Food insecurity is and has been a very real concern in the Saratoga community just like so many other towns. He also participated in packing some bags with the gang. John gratefully accepted our substantial donation and became a little emotional while explaining his center has not received such a generous amount before.



While I witnessed the emotion on John’s face, it made me proud and grateful to be a Rotarian. To know first hand how this project impacted so many needy folks cemented my commitment to Rotary. This is what it’s all about! Projects like these are critically important regarding our motto “service above self”. I’m certain this service project re-energized many of the participants. It sure did for me!

2024 DISTRICT CONFERENCE, HOSTED BY AVON ROTARY



Reflection by Laurie Vonglis, Many-timer: I've been a Rotarian for twenty years this June. In those twenty years I've been to our district conference almost every year. My interest in attending each year is driven by my hope to get re-energized and re-inspired. To help remind me as to my WHY. Why did I join Rotary and why do I keep doing what I love doing. Of all the conferences I've been to, this one struck me as the most meaningful, most impactful at every turn. Not because I was on the planning committee or a member of the host club but because of the impactful, heartfelt speakers. Our very own DG Julie shared her very personal story which was an emotional story of hope and strength. Each of the keynote speakers including the youth inspired me and shared very relevant stories. The Linking Hands team did an outstanding job and pulled at the heart strings yet again.

As part of the club's district conference committee, I'm very proud of the end result. It was a lot of work for sure but it was a great experience working with this team of Avon Rotarians!

Rambling On Rotary (retro)—May 2019



Each of our meetings has Rotary's Four-Way Test posted on a banner. "Is it the TRUTH? Is it FAIR to all concerned? Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS? Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?" During the induction of new members, I also refer to Rotary's Code of Conduct. "AS A ROTARIAN, I will: (1) Act with

integrity and high ethical standards in my personal and professional life, (2) Deal fairly with others and treat them ... with respect." [The first 2 of the 4 principles.] These statements create a commitment on our part as to how to act and behave in all of our daily activities.

When I received the May 2019 edition of The Rotarian that had a cover with "The Four-Way Test in a Post-Truth Era" I was intrigued. In Joseph Epstein's article he references politicians, news persons, and corporate leaders who have been less than truthful. Then he states, "Everywhere you turn, the first of the Four Ways – "Is it the truth?" – would seem more and more in danger of going by the boards." That hit me hard. What is truth? Is it an opinion? Is it something factual? What makes something factual?

Mr. Epstein continues that "Truth and fairness are most elusive where passions are engaged...

You're likely to build goodwill and better friendships, to be beneficial to all concerned only if ...

you keep your eye on the goals of truth and fairness."

It is very disheartening when we are confronted by someone who is less than honest with us. When I have trusted

someone and then find that trust betrayed, I feel betrayed. When I believe what someone has told me and then find out it is a lie, it makes me angry. This is a "post-truth era" and in many respects that in and of itself is disheartening. What has happened to our society and our world, and what can be done to change this? Where have ethics, morality, and honesty gone?

I believe as Rotarians we are persons of action. Our actions make a difference throughout our community and the world. I do not need to repeat to you the impact we, as Avon Rotarians, have had because of our commitment to various projects and activities. So how do we change the dialogue regarding a "post-truth era"? I believe we change that by living in a "truth era" every day. And we do that by constantly keeping our Rotary Four-Way Test and Code of Conduct at the forefront of what we say, think, and do. When we act with integrity and high ethical standards, when we treat others with respect, our actions will be beneficial to all concerned and will build goodwill and better friendships.


The way to return to a "truth era" is by being truthful and fair in our daily activities. The acts of honesty and fairness demonstrated as we devote ourselves to serving others will come back as good will to each of us. As persons of action, when we act and behave as in a truth-era, we can change the world one person, one community at a time. Our Four-Way Test is the map and we need to follow it. And, as usual, I have rambled on long enough.

Yours in Rotary Service,
Bruce Amey



**END
POLIO
NOW**

2024 Wild Polio Case Counts as of April 30, 2024

<u>Country</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>Date of last case</u>
Afghanistan	6	2	Feb 2024
Pakistan	6	2	Feb 2024
Total	12	4	



For more information go to: <https://polioeradication.org/>

KEEP CALM

- ⇒ **TIME TO START PLANNING CORN FESTIVAL 2024**
- ⇒ **JOIN THE COMMITTEE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE**
- ⇒ **ALL HANDS ON DECK!**

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES...

- ◆ Assist at a weekly meeting as a greeter or 50/50 sales.
- ◆ Look for community service projects and join a team to help.
- ◆ Join a club committee.
- ◆ Organize an in-meeting service project.
- ◆ Plan a meeting program.
- ◆ Volunteer for the Corn Festival Committee.

Grocery items needed in May:

Pasta, Sauce,
Syrup, Ketchup,
Relish, Canned
Meat, Jam/Jelly,
Mashed Potatoes



Collection will be May 21 .

Place in the bin at our meeting. Thank you!

Fighting Hunger Together

Is a fellow Rotarian ill or in need?

Please contact the club
Sunshine Liaison

Barbara Herman
226-6735

